

eSupplement 3: Control intervention TREFAMS-ACE trials

Background

The MS-nurse consultations for MS-related fatigue covered two important study aspects to control for: (1) reliable information on MS-related fatigue; and (2) attention from an experienced MS professional in order to reassure the patient that his/her concerns or questions about fatigue will be taken seriously.

What

All MS-nurses involved in one of the TREFAMS-ACE trials participated in a 1-day training course. In this course the MS-nurses shared their approach to taking a fatigue-related nursing history, they were instructed as to how to provide relevant information on MS-related fatigue without giving concrete therapeutic advice that affects the contrast between the study groups, and they were informed of the restrictions concerning the referral of patients to other healthcare professionals within the hospital (i.e. MS team members). These newly-learned skills were practised using role-playing.

Equipment

A study-specific (Dutch) brochure was developed with the aim to provide standardized information about MS-related fatigue. Any referral to first or second line health care professionals was removed.

Who

Experienced and trained MS-nurses.

How, when and how much

Low-intensity treatment consisting of three individual face-to-face consultations of 45 minutes each, over a 4-month period.

Session 1 (baseline): Acquaintance, MS-related fatigue history, and providing standardized brochure.

Session 2 (1.5 months): Evaluating brochure and goal-setting.

Session 3 (4 months): Goal and treatment evaluation.

Where

MS-specialized outpatient clinic

Modifications

In some cases, the face-to-face sessions were replaced with phone sessions if needed.

Adherence

The number of sessions completed, the topics that were discussed, as well as the amount of allied healthcare during the study period was recorded.